

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) An outer door panel for an appliance door assembly, said outer door panel having a longitudinal axis and comprising:

a frame comprising opposite lateral sides, a top edge, and a bottom edge;

an outer surface extending from said frame, said outer surface outwardly curved between said lateral sides, said outwardly curved outer surface extending from said top to said bottom edges; and

a recessed control mounting surface comprising a bottom side and an opposing top side, said recessed control mounting surface extending inwardly and upwardly with respect to said longitudinal axis from said outer surface at said bottom side between said lateral sides, ~~said recessed control mounting surface top side~~ positioned a distance from said top edge, a portion of said outer surface extending between said ~~control mounting surface top side~~ and said top edge of said frame, at a vertical line defined on said outer surface parallel to the longitudinal axis, said top side extending outwardly with respect to the longitudinal axis a first distance and said bottom side extending outwardly with respect to the longitudinal axis a second distance substantially equal to said first distance.

2. (canceled)

3. (previously presented) An outer door panel in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said appliance door assembly is a dishwasher door assembly, said outer door panel defining a control panel cutout, said control mounting surface received within said cutout.

4. (original) An outer door panel in accordance with Claim 3 wherein said outer surface is fabricated from metal.

5. (previously presented) An outer door panel in accordance with Claim 3 wherein said control mounting surface is fabricated from plastic.

6. (canceled)

7. (original) An outer door panel in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said panel is unitary.

8. (currently amended) A unitary outer door panel for a dishwasher, said outer door panel comprising:

a frame portion comprising opposing lateral sides, a top edge, a bottom edge, and a longitudinal axis;

an outer surface portion extending between said opposing lateral sides and said top and bottom edges of said frame portion, said frame portion and said outer surface portion formed as a single piece, said outer surface portion outwardly curved between said lateral sides, said outwardly curved outer surface portion extending from said top to said bottom edges; and

a control panel mounting surface within said frame portion and surrounded by said outer surface portion, said control panel mounting surface comprising a bottom side and a top side, said control panel mounting surface inwardly inclined with respect to said longitudinal axis, such that said control panel mounting surface is mostly shielded by said outer surface portion, a portion of said outer surface extending between said top side and said top edge of said frame, at a vertical line defined on said outer surface parallel to the longitudinal axis, said top side extending outwardly with respect to the longitudinal axis a first distance and said bottom side extending outwardly with respect to the longitudinal axis a second distance substantially equal to said first distance.

9. (canceled)

10. (previously presented) An outer door panel in accordance with Claim 8 wherein said outer surface portion extends above and below, and on either side of said control panel mounting surface.

11. (previously presented) An outer door panel in accordance with Claim 8 wherein said control panel mounting surface is configured to receive a control panel.

12. (previously presented) An outer door panel in accordance with Claim 8 wherein said control mounting surface is fabricated from plastic.

13. (previously presented) An outer door panel in accordance with Claim 12 wherein said outer surface portion and said frame portion are fabricated from a single piece of metal.

14. (withdrawn) A dishwasher door assembly comprising:

an outer door panel having a longitudinal axis and comprising opposite lateral sides, a bottom edge, a top edge, and an outer surface extending between said lateral sides and said top edge, said outer surface outwardly curved between said lateral sides, said outwardly curved outer surface extending from said top to said bottom edges, said outer surface surrounding a recessed control surface disposed beneath said top edge of said outer panel, such that said recessed control surface is mostly shielded by said top edge, said recessed control surface disposed at an angle with respect to said longitudinal axis, said outer surface formed as a single piece; and

an inner door panel attached to said outer door panel.

15. (canceled)

16. (withdrawn) A dishwasher door assembly in accordance with Claim 14 wherein said recessed control surface comprises an escutcheon received in said outer surface.

17. (withdrawn) A dishwasher door assembly comprising:

an outer door panel comprising a longitudinal axis, a bowed outer surface and a recessed control surface shielded by said outer surface, said recessed control surface disposed at an angle with respect to said longitudinal axis, said outer surface completely surrounding said recessed control surface, said bowed outer surface outwardly curved between a first lateral side and a second lateral side of said door panel, said outwardly curved bowed outer surface extending from a top edge of said door panel to a bottom edge of said door panel; and

a unitary inner door panel attached to said outer door panel.

18. (withdrawn) A dishwasher door assembly in accordance with Claim 17 wherein said outer door panel is unitary.

19. (withdrawn) A dishwasher door assembly in accordance with Claim 17 wherein said outer door assembly comprises an escutcheon.

20. (withdrawn) A dishwasher door assembly in accordance with Claim 17 wherein said outer surface is fabricated from metal.

21. (withdrawn) A dishwasher door assembly in accordance with Claim 19 wherein said escutcheon is fabricated from plastic.